

Message Text

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40

ACTION ARA-20

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AID-20 EB-11 PC-04 DOTE-00 DRC-01 /108 W

----- 116542

R 011117Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3588

INFO AMCONSUL BELEM

AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE

AMCONSUL RECIFE

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SALVADOR

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 3889

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, BR

SUBJECT: MORE CRITICISM OF MEDICI ADMINISTRATION POLICIES

REF: BRASILIA 3722

1. IN LAST FEW DAYS A NUMBER OF BRAZILIAN DAILIES
HAVE CARRIED COMMENTS CRITICAL OF MEDICI ADMINISTRATION
TRANSAMAZONICA PROJECT BASED ON SUPPOSEDLY
OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. THE
TRANSAMAZONICA AND BEEN EXTENSIVELY BALLYHOOED DURING
THE MEDICI GOVERNMENT AS THE ADMINISTRATION'S
RESPONSE TO THE OBJECTIVE OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION OF THE
UNUSED AREAS OF BRAZIL AND IN ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM
OF OVER POPULATION OF THE DROUGHT-STRICKEN
NORTHEAST. DESPITE INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM AND
PRIVATELY EXPRESSED BRAZILIAN DOUBTS CONCERNING THE
MONUMENTAL AND UNECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE TRANSAMAZONICA
PROJECT, THE DRAMATIC PARALLEL WITH THE OPENING UP
OF THE WEST IN THE U.S. CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF
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MANY BRAZILIANS.

2. WITH THE ADVENT OF THE GEISEL ADMINISTRATION A SHIFT IN EMPHASIS WAS ANTICIPATED AND EVENTUALLY CONFIRMED WITH AN ANNOUNCED EMPHASIS ON RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION. IN RECENT DAYS, HOWEVER, THE ALLEGED MINISTRY OF INTERIOR REPORT APPEARED TO CHALLENGE NOT ONLY THE CONCEPT BEHIND THE TRANSAMAZONICA PROJECT BUT ALSO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COLONIZATION PROGRAM WHICH, BECAUSE OF A LACK OF RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, WAS QUITE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SUCH CRITICISM.

3. AGAIN IT APPEARED -- AS DESCRIBED IN REFTEL -- THAT THE GEISEL ADMINISTRATION WAS TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT BY CRITICISING POLICIES OF ITS PREDECESSOR. ON MAY 30, HOWEVER, AN OFFICIAL NOTE OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WAS PUBLISHED DENYING THAT ANY SUCH REPORT HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY THE MINISTRY AND STATING THAT "ANY SUCH DOCUMENT REPORTS A POINT OF VIEW UNDER THE EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF ITS AUTHORS WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR." THE NOTE GOES ON TO PRAISE THE "GREAT PIONEERING WORK OF THE TRANSAMAZONICA PROJECT." THE PRESTIGIOUS ESTADO DE SAO PAULO ADDS THAT THE REPORT IN QUESTION, "THE IMPACT OF THE TRANSAMAZONICA ON URBAN NUCLEI," WAS PREPARED A YEAR AGO BY THE JOSE PINHEIRO FOUNDATION AND WAS MADE PUBLIC NOW BY THE "TECHNICAL AREA OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR."

4. THE FEISTY JORNAL DE BRASILIA, ON THE OTHER HAND, STATES THAT THE PRESS COMMENTARY SURPRISED THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND HIS "TEAM," NONE OF WHOM HAD "GIVEN INTERVIEWS, DISCLOSED DOCUMENTS, OR MADE ANY REFERENCES TO THE TRANSAMAZONICA." THE JORNAL REPORTED THAT THE SOURCE OF CRITICISM WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A "DIRTY GAME" ARISING OUT OF PERNAMBUCO STATE POLITICS.

5. COMMENT: THE MYSTERIOUS ALLUSIONS TO PERNAMBUCO POLITICS REFERS TO MANEUVERS OVER THE GUBERNATORIAL SUCCESSION IN WHICH FORMER MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE MOURA CAVALCANTI, WHO PLAYED A ROLE IN THE

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COLONIZATION PROGRAM, IS STRUGGLING TO ESTABLISH HIS CANDIDACY AGAINST LOCAL POLITICAL FORCES. WHAT REMAINS CLEAR IS THAT ALTHOUGH THE GEISEL ADMINISTRATION MAY HAVE ONCE MORE BEEN BUSHWHACKED BY SECTARIAN POLITICAL INTERESTS, IT REMAINS FIRM IN ITS DETERMINATION TO AVOID PROVOKING MEDICI SUPPORTERS BY LENDING ITSELF TO ATTACKS ON MEDICI ADMINISTRATION POLICIES. CRIMMINS

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